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SIPDIS

DEPT PASS TO USTDA-MARIN; EXIM-RICHTER
BAGHDAD FOR MCCULLOUGH
ROME PASS TO TSA - ANTHONY GIOVANNIELLO
DAKAR PASS TO FAA - MOIRA KEANE
DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR FAA MEL CINTRON, AHARRIS
DOC FOR 3317/ITA/OA/KAREN BURRESS AND 3130/USFC/OIO/ANESA/MCREED

E.O. 12598: N/A

TAGS: [EAIR](#) [ECON](#) [EAID](#) [ASEC](#) [ERTD](#) [EINV](#) [PGOV](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: NIGERIA: AVIATION AIRPORT SECURITY WORKSHOP WITH TSA

REF: A. ABUJA 456

[1](#)B. ABUJA 361

[1](#)C. ABUJA 204

[1](#)D. ABUJA 168

[1](#)E. LAGOS 40

[1](#)F. 08 ABUJA 2313

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[1](#)1. Summary. Ambassador and the new Minister of Aviation, Babatunde Omotoba, opened the third workshop of the U.S. and Nigeria's Public Private Partnership (PPP on Aviation Airport Security and Safety on March 17. The purpose of the PPP is to assist the GON in achieving U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Category 1 certification (Reftels D and F). The U.S. Department of Homeland Security - Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) both participated in the workshop to a standing room only crowd of aviation regulators and operators. A TSA five member team briefed the participants on TSA's security assessment procedures. The Ambassador explained that the purpose of the workshop was to ensure Nigerian air carriers understand their roles and the requirements to flying direct routes to the United States as per Category 1 requirements and guidelines. Minister Omotoba thanked the USG for its continued support in assisting Nigeria in its quest for its Category 1 rating. He confirmed that Nigeria has passed over 75% of the FAA requirements and hopes that TSA will approve of security procedures at the Abuja airport. End Summary.

[1](#)2. On March 17, 2009, an aviation workshop sponsored by the U.S. Mission in collaboration with the Ministry of Aviation as part of a public private partnership (PPP) was held in Abuja. The workshop focused on the security requirements needed for Nigeria to achieve FAA Category 1 status, in order for Nigerian airlines to fly directly to and from the United States. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security - Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) both participated in the workshop to a standing room only crowd of aviation regulators and operators. The EPA representative is in Nigeria on a short term assignment as a science fellow. The TSA Team was in Nigeria to conduct a security assessment of the Abuja airport, as a necessary step for Nigerian carriers to fly.

[1](#)3. The Ambassador, in her opening remarks, said that this security workshop was the third in a series on aviation safety and security public private partnership (PPP) workshops. She noted that the first PPP workshop was held in November 2008, and it established the critical steps that the Nigerian government (GON) and the private

sector needed to take in order to attain Category 1 (Reftel F). The second workshop took place on January 20 and focused on Search and Rescue (Reftel D). The Ambassador explained that the objective of this workshop was for TSA to present and discuss its requirements for Nigerian airlines to fly direct to the U.S. once Category 1 certification is attained. The Ambassador congratulated Omotoba on the GON's commitment to upgrade airport facilities and expressed hope that the workshop will enhance bilateral co-operation in air travel.

¶4. The Ambassador emphasized strong collaboration as a prerequisite to overcoming current obstacles and noted future workshops will be held to buttress the USG commitment. Upcoming event are:

- An April meeting featuring the FAA discussing Category 1 requirements for the regulator and the industry.
- A May meeting with the U.S. 17th Air Force, Africa Command to assist with a mock disaster drill, and a workshop on runway maintenance, safety, and security to be held in Lagos (Reftel A).

¶5. In his welcome address, Omotoba commended the collaboration between the United States and Nigeria in improving aviation safety and security. He also praised the Ambassador's continued support especially through the workshops that have been held. He noted that international air travel is crucial to Nigeria's development and will act as a catalyst to Nigeria's economy. Omotoba announced that Nigeria's three designated carriers for U.S. air routes, Bellview Airlines, Arik Air, and Virgin Nigeria, have already been given "economic rights", which are required for foreign carriers, and are presently working on completing the next step in the process, operational specification. The Minister proudly commented that the GON has completed 50% of each of the eight critical steps needed for

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Category 1 certification (Reftels B and E). He expressed confidence that the international airport in Abuja would pass the TSA security requirements, and be certified for direct travel to the U.S. (NOTE: The international airport in Lagos passed the TSA assessment in December 2007.

¶6. At the workshop break-out sessions focused on:

- Transfer and transit passenger-disaster and emergency procedures.
- Preparing for a terrorist hijacking, what to do, who does it.
- Establishing a layered approach to authority.
- Security within an aircraft.
- Passenger, baggage and cargo security.
- Security environment and surveillance detection.
- Securing the airport perimeter.
- Access control and aircraft protection measures.
- Procedures in restricted areas for airport operation.
- Clearing procedures for persons and vehicles.
- A background checks system for employees.
- Controls for gates, doors and entry.
- Passenger and cabin baggage screening.
- Screening check point measures

COMMENT

¶7. Nigerian participation in the workshop was intense and enthusiastic. The participants were very engaged and sought more information. There has been a consistent theme at each workshop to date - the Nigerian aviation industry hungers for more training and appreciates the USG's commitment. Category 1 certification has taken on symbolic stature outside the aviation sector and is considered a potential landmark step in development. The Nigerians are eager to work closely with the USG on next steps and understand the importance of the upcoming workshops in Lagos.

¶8. This cable was coordinated with Consulate Lagos.

SANDERS